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von Halder

N. 4569.

A S K E T C H
O F T H E
T I M E S ;
O R,
M E M O I R S
O F
L O R D D E R V I L L E .

I N T W O V O L U M E S .

V O L . I .



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. BEW, Paternoster-Row;

A N D

E. MACKLEW, opposite the Opera-House, Hay-Market.

M D C C L X X X I .

very soul!—nay, even the plenteous
harvest of luxurious pleasures which
you now boast you are reaping will
soon lose their endearing sweets—
your lascivious appetite will be pall'd,
and then instead of being happy at
the success of your intrigues, you
will view the world with pity and
your own soul with disgust and
aversion.

I M T W O V O L U M E S.

From these considerations
being no probability of
that your present happiness
are pleas'd to term it, can be of any
long duration, let me entreat you to
reflect, but for a moment, on the
guilty pleasures you are in pursuit

of. Alas! how often have I seen
the victims of these pleasures

M E M O I R S
O F
L O R D D E R V I L L E.

L E T T E R I.

L O R D D E R V I L L E,
T O
S I R T H O M A S C H A R L T O N.

L E S T, Charlton, you should be induced to put on sackcloth and bewail the loss of your old friend, I have retired with pen, ink and paper, by way of giving you to understand he is still in the land of the

VOL. I. B living

living, and ready to make any atonement whatever for his late behaviour; finding, on recollection, that I treated you with the greatest disrespect, for which I crave your pardon—However I should like to know what your different conjectures were on finding the bird was flown—not into the air, but to the delectable inclosure of a fair one's arms—and that no soul could give the least item which way he took. I confess it was treating you with an insult that calls aloud for retaliation, yet had I been certain my life must have paid the forfeit I should have persevered, for Love call'd to arms, and it wou'd have been high treason against the majesty of Venus

not

not to have obeyed. I had some intention of making you acquainted with my design, but being so very, very conscientious, there is no possibility of inducing you to take part in a little harmless amusement; such, for instance, as scaling a wall at midnight to steal to a lady's chamber—setting fire to an old fellow's house by way of getting an opportunity to run off with his daughter—or knocking a jealous-pated husband on the head who stood between your friend and his wishes. Nay, my dear Tommy, now, don't pout, for I had no such diabolical intention; no, far be it from me—the employment I should have given you wou'd have been of

a far more tender nature, and such, to judge from appearances, as you are excellently adapted for, it being neither more nor less than to have toyed with a fine, lively, soft, yielding wench—such an armful!—but you have no spirit!—dull as a beetle, by Jupiter!—“Experience has open’d your eyes and taught you to view things in their proper light”—Experience has made you a fool, I believe, and——but what the plague am I puzzling myself about your particularities for, when my own affairs are of such a pleasing nature, that I could dwell on them for ever, therefore I shall defer giving any farther advise until another opportunity.

You

You are sensible I was ever of too liberal a disposition to hoard up my pleasures, but always endeavoured to make my friends partakers with me; or rather, as your wise noddle terms it, too great a fool to keep my own secrets—no matter, I shall proceed because I know you to be secret as the grave, not as Frankly observes “with a tomb-stone upon it, to tell every one whose dust it carries,” but from possessing too high principles of honour to betray the sacred trust of friendship—yet should there arise any particular inclination in that prolific brain of yours to publish the trust I repose, I’d have you recollect there are such things to

be had as pistols—and pistol you I will you may depend on it.

Being much better acquainted in the Marnsdown family than I it is needless to attempt a description of the goddess of my adoration, for, notwithstanding that contracted brow of your's, I at present pay homage at the shrine of the joy-inspiring Henrietta — I frequently visited at her cousin Townsend's during her stay in town, and as she was a fine girl could not refrain from taking a few liberties, which from their favourable reception soon put us on very familiar terms—in short, I grew fond and she loving, but it was very seldom we could get
by

by ourselves; nor even then were we suffered to remain so more than a few minutes, her little vixen of a cousin being continually at our heels.

As I am not apt to be idle in these cases I found sufficient opportunity to inform her of the flame she had inspir'd me with, and after a little flattery and persuasion gained her consent to take a trip to some snug retreat where we might enjoy the pleasure of each other's company secure from interruption—Indeed I cannot say I found it any difficult matter, for she was altogether as ready as I willing—these are the girls, Tom, that I look on as lawful prizes, and

although I may be subjected to the stigma of libertine, and a fellow destitute of principle, yet, by Heaven, I should be as tenacious of leading the truly virtuous girl into the path of Vice as e'er a sentimental coxcomb upon earth—but when a woman takes every method to attract your notice, and even anticipates your wishes, with what propriety can you accuse the man as the cause of her ruin—I have a sister, and never did brother love with truer affection, yet was I to find her mistress of any of these wanton airs, however my feelings might be hurt and my honour affected, I should look on her gallant as a person that was merely her assistant in entailing
disgrace

disgrace on the family—Thus much you may naturally be led to imagine I have wrote as an excuse for my present amour, which I in part deny, as they always were the fixed sentiments of my heart, and although I found Miss Marnsdown as warm as the most extravagant wishes could desire, I still hold myself bound to answer all demands for satisfaction that may be made by any of her kindred.

The day I gave you the slip was the time appointed for my taking her off, having prepared for some time back a retired little box for our reception, and where I am now enjoying

ing

ing all the sweets the possession of a lovely woman can give—Our plot met with many interruptions before we could bring it rightly to bear, being obliged to act with the greatest precaution by way of preventing Miss Townsend from having any suspicion of our intentions, yet in spite of all our vigilance, I thought I should have been obliged to get some friend to do her a good-natured turn, that by having concerns of her own there might be an end to her curiosity of prying into ours — I should have applied to you for that piece of service but concluded I should have a lecture, instead of assistance, therefore wrote to my old acquaintance Brydone

done, but plague on the fellow I have never heard from him since—he, I suppose, has got some intrigue of his own in hand, otherwise, I am certain, he would have snapt at the bait; unless he has been star-gazing too and met with some meteor whose power has influenced him to become as wise and good as a certain person already mentioned—It is most unaccountable that those very objects which induce me to run into every extravagance should convert the rest of mankind to sobriety—it will be my turn by and bye—all in good time, and as I have not began my reformation so soon, why I'll repent so much the faster, by which means I think I shall be able
to

to overtake you before you reach your journey's end.

My meeting with his Grace of G. and you at Bath was rather unlucky, as my sole intention of going there, (not having the least idea of the races) was, that my arrival might be announced in the news-papers, and from being heard of in that quarter prevent all enquiries respecting what was become of me—I was so chagrined at having my scheme defeated, together with being partly obliged to appear mightily delighted with the rencounter, though with all my soul I wished you both a thousand miles off, that for the life of me I could not form
any

any excuse to get away, and the time drawing near that I had appointed to meet the lady, I thought it much better to decamp without any apology than that awkward one I most certainly should have made—but by this time I reckon my unmannerly departure is almost forgot and only enrolled in the long list of my *whimsicalities*—if I am right, and you can so far overlook the offence as to inform me how his grace behaved on my disappearance, I shall esteem it an additional proof of your friendship, as I shall then be able to judge what kind of reception I may expect when next we meet—indeed, to say the truth, I am under very little apprehension

prehenſion on his account, as the buſineſs of the turf, to which he has become a mere ſlave, has often prevented him from taking notice of things that were of much greater conſequence.

My quitting the ſcene of action after he had taken ſuch pains to give me ſome reliſh for the approaching ſport, will only be attributed to my want of taſte—Such an evening's entertainment!—to let you into a ſecret had not my thoughts been employed on my intended eſcape I never could have ſtood it—for, as it was, he almoſt drove me crazy with his bay fillies, brown colts, black horſes and brood
mares

mares—provided I had staid I should have been almost fearful of remaining on the course during the sweepstakes between his Flyaway, General Spencer's Silver-tail, and Sir John Mad's White-legs, least some dismal consequence would have been produced by a disappointment, for he had set his heart so much on the *glory* of gaining the *victory*, that I, perhaps, being nearest in blood, might have suffered for poor Flyaways incapacity.

There must be something very infatuating in *horse racing* that I cannot find out, or its followers would never put themselves to such an enormous
expence

expence and trouble in breeding and training those noble animals merely to experience the most dreadful uncertainty, by risking their whole substance on the fleetness of the beast, and the much to be suspected honesty of the groom—but as our chief happiness depends in the enjoyment and possession of those pleasures we most admire, I shall not attempt to cast a single invective against the propriety of his proceedings, while he suffers those to pass unheeded which are the life and soul of your

DERVILLE.

LET-

LORD DERVILLE. 17

LETTER II.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

LORD DERVILLE.

My Lord,

HOWEVER neglectful I may appear for not obeying your last summons, it will be inconsistent with your usual lenity to suppose me capable of slighting the honour of your friendship, or ever forgetting the numerous favours that you have continually heap'd upon me.—From the commencement of our intimacy at

college to this moment have I found you the steady guardian of my interest—watchful to place me in the line of promotion, and ever ready to exert your influence in my favour; was I not therefore fully acquainted with the generous sentiments of my patron I should almost think it needless, after such a flagrant trespass of gratitude, to attempt a palliation of this apparent disrespect; but from the experience I have had of your partiality I flatter myself I shall still be forgiven—especially when you are informed that the whole of my inattention was occasioned by an “earth-treading star that makes dim heaven’s light!”—Beauty caught my soul

soul and rendered me incapable of attending aught beside—Beauty, that powerful loadstone which neither of us ever had power to repel—yet, in my opinion, we have reaped as much advantage by our non-resistance as if we had acted with all the spirit of opposition; for by quietly submitting to its power the influence of one has been lessened by the attraction of another, and although we have not possessed the blessings of freedom, we have at least enjoyed the pleasures of variety.

Few, I believe, very few, are more cautious of stumbling in these snares than myself—and yet, notwithstanding

ing my being one of the worst qualified to withstand temptation, am I always blundering in the way of it—but the fact is, the generality of country wenches are so confoundedly fond of a cockade and red-coat that we, who wear them, run the hazard of being ravish'd in every town we enter—I confess that is not the case with my present enamorata, for she is vastly shy and modest, with a thousand other strange whims, but to counterbalance all she's as lovely a piece of flesh and blood as it is possible for the most extravagant imagination to create.

Now it is most confoundedly vexatious that, at a time, when a whole
string;

string of soft, tender, delicate creatures are sighing, spreading their lures and setting their caps at me, that I should be such an arrant coxcomb to suffer myself to be captivated by a cold, unfeeling—I must not wrong her either, for here was a young fellow, one of the dull, stupid, lover-kind of gentlemen, one day on a visit, and if I have any skill in the eyes, I observed his sentimental nonsense occasion her little sparklers to speak a language not very encouraging to my wishes.

I have so long been the favourite of success, with respect to the fair-sex, that I find it impossible to give

over the pursuit, and as there is every reason to think she can love—why not me as well as another—I'll try however—My person is sufficient to attract the notice of any woman—vanity, you will say—well, be it so—and I hold vanity, in some cases, to be one of the greatest blessings we can possess; for while a man pursues any point, secure, in his own opinion, of gaining the end, he proceeds with double spirit, without dread or anxiety, and although the disappointment, should it prove contrary to his expectations, may be greater, yet I aver that that very security gave him ten times the chance of accomplishing his design.

I like-

I likewise think, another addition to my vanity, that I am a competent master of that self-sufficient *nothingness* with which females in general are so easily caught — consisting principally in a volubility of expression, without any great necessity for one single word of sense—condescension sufficient to sacrifice what little judgment you may be master of to their imaginary circumspection—and flattery to extol every mother's daughter, no matter how ugly or ignorant, for her beauty and understanding—to all which most desirable qualifications you may suppose me capable, from the frequency of being in their company, to deal out scandal, over a

cup of tea, with e'er a disappointed old maid in the kingdom.

Thus accoutered for a female campaign what should deter me from taking the field? or what grounds have I for despairing of success?—none—let me then once find the clue to her disposition and I'll vary shapes with Protheus but what I'll attain a free passage to her heart—She is worth some trouble, therefore it would be quite unpardonable, in one of my stamp, to let a mere shadow scare me from so valuable a prize—Besides, I shall receive more satisfaction in bringing one of these high-flown damsels into the common road,
for

for they must undoubtedly imagine themselves to be of some superior order, than I should in the possession of twenty of those sensible girls, who, conscious of their weakness, are ever ready to meet you half-way, and by that means prevent your having the necessity of forcing them to what in in their hearts they all long for.

For some time I danced attendance with very little prospect of success; nay, was obliged to put twenty different schemes in practice before I could obtain admittance in the family; that point I have now accomplished, and every new difficulty which may arise will only serve as an emulative
to

to induce me to pursue this shy little angel with redoubled vigor.

The first time I saw her was at the assembly, and no contemptible one, I assure you—there being a number of fine women, considering the size of the place—I had not been many minutes in the room before I cast my eye on a young lady, who I thought deserving all the attention it was my power to give, and accordingly solicited the favour of her hand for the evening; to which she partly consented—there is certainly a pleasure in dancing with the handsomest woman in company, and this I now thought myself pretty sure of, when,
just

Just before the ball began, the angelic Lucy entered—her appearance drew the attention of the whole room; and, by Jove, I never was half so far gone by a single glance in my life—her steps were accompanied with a peculiar grace, a delicate simplicity appeared in her whole form, and her open countenance was fully expressive of the most engaging sensibility.

From being so immediately struck with her person you may easily imagine I was not a little chagrined at having been in such a hurry to engage myself; especially as I did not perceive a single gallant to be of their party.

What

What was to be done?—I could not bear the idea of losing the happiness, which I instantly pictured to myself I should receive by dancing with her—nor, on the other hand, could I attempt leaving the young lady, who I had already engaged, without the greatest impoliteness—but, altho' a foldier, having an utter aversion to monarchial governments, and looking on Complaisance, at that moment, as a petty tyrant, I resolved to throw off allegiance and submit to the agreeable sway of Inclination—whereupon, making some unintelligible apology, I shifted my quarters, and approached the beautiful stranger with all that confidence which we sons
of

Mars in a tolerable degree possess—judge then what was my disappointment at my freedom being received with a frown, and that my request should be peremptorily rejected—I attempted to take her hand, in hopes of convincing her she was insensible of the honour she had refused, but that was not allowed—for wheeling to the right, she march'd off, leaving me most curfedly nettled at my defeat—I was now in a blessed dilemma—had I quitted the room, or even staid and not been able to have got a decent partner, I should experienced the wit of all the red-coats in town; nor could I think of returning to the lady whom I had so egregiously offended.

fended without expecting some retaliation, and a second repulse was what I had no great inclination to experience—besides I could not keep my eyes from this lovely enchantress, and perceiving a lady with her to whom she appeared to pay great attention and respect, I thought it would be no impolitic scheme to attack her, when if I found she had any influence I might endeavour to get it exerted in my favour—placing myself therefore close behind her, I soon observ'd she was not a little proud of her authority—whenever the sweet girl was applied to for her hand, she refered to the other for her approbation, which I had the satisfaction to hear repeat—

repeatedly refused—though I was in cold sweat every time lest she should give her consent before I had an opportunity to try my generalship—however, getting by her side I began to conceive some hopes, but found I should be obliged to act with the greatest precaution.

Before I proceed any farther I must inform you, that this lady, who is about forty, has been married six or seven months to the father of Miss Lucy, vicar of S——, a village near two miles from this town; she was the widow of a plodding old farmer, in the neighbourhood, who left her a large fortune, on which the sensible
divine

divine casting an eye, conceived it would be a pretty additional tythe to his living, paid his devoirs to her and they soon became one—her youth was entirely spent in a farm house, where milking of cows and making butter were her chief employments; no wonder then if she appears awkward in a polite circle; and notwithstanding she might have been a very respectable character, when in her original line, yet now her attempts at gentility frequently render her an object of ridicule.

But to return—I soon got into discourse with her, and after chatting a little on some immaterial subject, I
took

took an opportunity to express a kind of surprise at her not being engaged in the ball.

“Why, to be sure, Sir, (returned
“the divine’s rib) I am very seldom
“idle in these here places—I likes to
“foot it vastly—but I don’t know
“how it is, somehow or other, I am
“very lazy to night—yet it is a mor-
“tal shame though that such a smart
“young gentleman, as you, should
“stand idle while so many ladies want
“partners.”

“Very true, madam; but having,
“as I may very justly term it, the
“misfortune to be an entire stranger,

“ together with being no proficient
“ in the art, I was fearful I might
“ meet with a partner as wanting as
“ myself—could your ladyship, whose
“ superior abilities would sufficiently
“ atone to the company for my inca-
“ city, condescend to favour me with
“ your hand, I shall be proud of
“ the honour, and happy to partake
“ of the diversion.”

“ O dear, Sir!—I—I—you must
“ excuse me, indeed.”

“ Perhaps, madam, by your inter-
“ cession, that young lady might be
“ prevailed on to do me the favour
“ since you refuse.”

“ Yes,

“Yes, certainly, Sir—Lucy don’t
“you hear what the gentleman says?
“Sure you know how to behave,
“child!”

“Madam, I——” was all she
could utter—her embarrassment, I
suppose, came from recollecting the
manner in which I had before accosted
her—let the cause be what it would
this was the time to push my fortune;
without waiting her recovery I arose
and taking her half-withdrawn hand
lead her out, at the same time as-
suring her if she was pre-engaged, or
that any gentleman should come in
whom she had any desire to oblige, I
would immediately resign whatever

regret I might experience by my acquiescence.

Thus gained I the point I wished, and had frequently the ecstasy of pressing one of the finest hands in the universe :

So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost.

Yet, in defiance of all my assiduities, she maintained the most distant reserve the whole evening, nor could I draw her to the least familiarity—and, as if some devil was resolv'd I should not, she very early expressed a wish to retire.

After she was gone all my endeavours to put her out of my head were

to

to no purpose; therefore, least I might make myself appear ridiculous, I resolved to go to my lodgings and form some plan that would introduce me to her acquaintance—No sooner at home than I recollected that I had not made the least enquiry who, or what she was, or where to be found—My first employment, in the morning, was to get that intelligence; which having obtain'd I resolved to pay them a visit—this I did a few mornings after, but to no purpose—the old lady was from home, and the young one, being slightly indisposed begg'd to be excus'd—after calling several times, and meeting with answers to pretty near the same effect,

I despair'd of getting into her company—various were the methods I tried to fall in her way, without the least success—at last I bethought of attacking the vicar—him I soon met with, and being a tolerable facetious old fellow, after having been in his company three or four times, in which I took no little pains to render myself agreeable, I had the good fortune to be invited to dine with him—I went, you may be sure—found the ladies at home—renew'd my acquaintance, which was tolerably well received by one, though not over and above cordially by the other—From this introduction, however, I have the privilege of calling at pleasure, but,

but, as yet, have no reason to boast, for the little plague is so very tacit that there is no bringing her to be more than distantly polite.

Now, my Lord, having given you a faithful detail of what has detain'd me from accepting your kind invitation, which I flatter myself you will acknowledge to be a sufficient excuse, I have the honour to subscribe myself, your Lordship's

most obedient,

humble servant,

FRANK BRYDONE.

L. E. T.

LETTER III.

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON,

TO

LORD DERVILLE.

GEORGE! George! Into what a labyrinth of wretchedness will thy headstrong passions lead thee?—Too late, I fear, you will be convinced, by thus following, without the least check, the extravagant bent of your wild inclinations, that instead of the blooming rose of Content you have been cherishing the fanged thorn of Misery—a thorn that will probe your
very

very foul!—nay, even the plenteous harvest of luxurious pleasures which you now boast you are reaping will soon lose their endearing sweets—your lascivious appetite will be pall'd, and then, instead of being happy at the success of your intrigues, you will view the object with pity, and your own actions with disgust and aversion!

From these considerations, and there being no probability, in my opinion, that your present happiness, as you are pleas'd to term it, can be of any long duration, let me entreat you to reflect, but for a moment, on the guilty pleasures you are in pursuit of

of—the iniquity in which you live, for seducing a girl into the path of wretchedness and horror is not less criminal because it is become fashionable—the misery you have entail'd on a once happy family, by this last act of brutality, and when you once perceive them in their true colours, I have too great an opinion of your sensibility to think it possible for you to remain any longer in that path of infamy into which you have so precipitately rush'd.

Yet what reparation can ever be made to the lovely, unsuspecting, Henrietta, for that innocence which, by basely taking advantage of her inexperience,

experience, you have so treacherously robb'd her of? I know your high soul will start aghast at the thought of marrying the woman you have possess'd—what then, when, from various causes, you may think proper to cast her off, is to become of her?—Because she was of a sprightly disposition, and not being mistress of sufficient art to disguise her partiality for a fellow, whose agreeable appearance might render him a formidable enemy to the most cautious fair, you must trample on all laws of humanity and think her destruction a lawful prize!—how could such an unmanly sentiment procure admission in thy once generous breast?

I always

I always knew thee for a libertine, but never could have suspected Lord Derville of seeking opportunities to ruin the unwary!—You scorn to seduce the truly virtuous maid!—where can we expect to meet with virtue if it is a stranger in the family of the Marnsdown's?—the old lady has ever been respected as an exemplary parent, for that care and attention she has always paid to the education of her daughters—what then must be her anxiety, her distress, when she finds those precepts, which she has been for years endeavouring to inculcate in the minds of her offspring, poisoned and destroyed by the insinuating address of a too accomplished profligate?

As

As I am not unacquainted with the fertility of your brain, and the probability there is of success when you are fully bent on any design, let me request you to employ that ingenuity for once in a generous deceit—restore, I may say, the wretched Henrietta to her disconsolate friends—and, in the restoration, endeavour to form some plausible excuse for her elopement—by which means, though you cannot return her pure and unspotted, yet, by saving appearances, it may give her a just sense of the indiscretion, and from an early repentance of her folly she may still become a valuable acquisition to society—In complying with this you will, perhaps, save her
from

from that life of prostitution which too many unhappy females plunge into when once forsaken by their ungenerous seducers—I urge not that it is done from any vicious inclination—on the contrary, I believe it frequently arises from a consciousness of their guilt and the contempt they are most likely to be treated with by their acquaintance, and am certain that the feeling mind can bear a thousand injuries, with less regret, from the uncharitable stranger, than a single mark of disdain from that person they once call'd friend—However I may be attach'd to the softer part of the creation, I confess I have met with very few but what, in such cases, scandal

scandal has been their chief characteristic—and have heard them exult, with as much glee, over an unhappy frail one, as the rapacious hounds at the moans of a fallen deer—Miss Seldown, indeed, is a living example that pity is not totally eradicated from the female breast—I have frequently beheld the sympathetic tear steal from her lovely eye, while her callous companions have been casting the blackest insinuations on the credulity of their sex—From my speaking of her in this manner I know you will persist in your old assertion, that I am caught, and as a lover may be allowed to exaggerate—but I tell you, George, you are quite mistaken—I

honour

honour, respect and esteem, nay think her as amiable as *any* of her sex—yet does it necessarily follow that I must give her the preference to *all*?—notwithstanding your boasted experience you are totally ignorant of the pleasures arising from an intercourse with a virtuous mind—more heart-felt satisfaction have I known by conversing with Miss Johnson, though I never beheld her but as I might a sister, than ever you felt even in the height of your transports—I have but just returned from making a round to visit her, the old gentleman at the request of his own wife, having taken her from our neighbourhood, which was the reason of my not answering your's before.

I am

I am sorry you did not pursue your intention of applying to me for assistance, as I should most undoubtedly have thrown some barriers in your way, with a view of preventing the mischief that has accrued.

Although we could not in any shape account for your sudden disappearance, yet our surprise was greatly lessened by recollecting Lord Derville was the subject. — When we mentioned it to his Grace he only said you was an inconsiderate blockhead and might go to the devil your own way; for his part he had something more material to think of, and should not concern himself about the matter.

The day being remarkable fine there appeared a great number of people, of all degrees and denominations, very early on the course—they mixed together without the least distinction—from royal blood down to the boot-catcher—from the artful knave, destitute of a single shilling, to the unwary stripling, flush with his patrimony—but as meetings of this kind are become so general I shall not attempt their reformation, nor concern myself with their impropriety—After the plate was decided came on the sweepstakes that you so much apprehended the consequences of; and, I suppose, you need not now be inform'd that General Spencer's Mar-

all

all almost distanced the other two—
It would be impossible for any countenance more fully to express the situation of the mind than did his grace of G.'s during the race.

On perceiving his hopes, of which he had imbibed a sufficiency, entirely crush'd, I am certain he felt a perturbation much easier for you to imagine than me to describe—and without taking the least notice left the course immediately.

I waited on him in the evening when he behaved with all the extravagance of a madman, swearing he had been jocky'd—that Flyaway was

E 2 capable

capable of beating, for a three mile heat, any horse in the kingdom, and that his blackguard rider must have lost on purpose.

I wish'd for you to be on the spot, as I know thy wit must have been exercised on the occasion; and that, in all probability, might have induced his lordship to verify your apprehensions, in letting you feel the effects of his disappointment, and would to heaven that had been the case rather than your having an opportunity to commit an act that will ever be held in the highest detestation by

THOMAS CHARLTON.

LET-

LETTER IV.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

CAPTAIN BRYDONE.

Frank,

AS my designs were not frustrated by the want of thy assistance, I shall the more ready put up with your excuse—though, beauty being the object of pursuit, you would have found the advantage in complying with my request, as I meant to give you an opportunity of gaining one, who, I dare venture a round sum, in point of at-

E 3

traction,

traction, is equal to your present inamorata, without being obliged to render yourself ridiculous.

How is it possible that a fellow of your spirit can run dangling after a girl who will not allow the least encouragement? nay, shuns all intercourse and visibly gives the preference to another—at least her little sparklers tell you so.—The harder the conquest the more glory in attaining it may be very good doctrine for a soldier—but if an equal prize could be gained with less hazard, I know which path I should take—besides, it is not doing as you would be done by.—In attempting to interrupt the never-to-be-dissolved

solved connection of two such harmless doves, as you represent her and her poor dear swain, will be a cruelty of the most unparalleled nature.

I shall never believe but what Cupid has been raising a mist and intoxicated your senses with some imaginary divinity—a country parson's daughter, bred in an almost unknown village, to possess all those graces, impossible!—you are certainly out of your wits, and if I do not hear of an amendment, by the next post, I'll have you confin'd and try the effects of a strait waistcoat—But, seriously, if this Lucy is that amiable girl you have pictur'd, seek not to

her miserable, even for your own sake—for, believe me, while you imagine her to be prepossess'd in favour of another, it will cast a damp upon all the joys she can ever bring—therefore, by employing any art to seduce her to your purpose, it will only be endeavouring to render her wretched and yourself dissatisfied.—Where can be the utility of taking all this pains and invention to entice one of these sentimental mortals into the road of pleasure, while there are numbers, by your own account, ready to leap into your arms?—was you sensible of the superiority of those pleasures which are deriv'd from a girl who makes you her choice you would
drop

drop all thoughts of this fair enchantress without a sigh.

Do not imagine I speak from theory alone, for I am, at this moment, in actual practice—retir'd from the cares of the busy world, with one of the sweetest creatures that ever graced mortality—Pleasures succeed pleasures in a never-ceasing round—how should it be otherwise when I always find her “warm, tender, full of wishes.” To be sure she is a little fiery now and then, but as I pay no great attention it soon blows over, a gentle shower succeeds, the clouds disperse, and in a few moments we are as good friends as ever.

I can

I admire the excellent opinion you have inculcated of your own qualifications—to be sure the success you have experienced among the ladies might make any man vain; yet, Frank, allowing you to be a remarkable fine figure, which receives no little addition from being dress'd *en militaire*, with an insinuating address that one would imagine sufficient to enveigle yourself into the good graces of the rankest prude, there are thousands of the sex with whom you would stand no chance, and that merely from their supposing your personal accomplishments must always give you the ascendancy—there is a direct contrast, in this respect, with girls and us—

we plume ourselves on being accompanied by a woman that is admir'd, while they choose to engross the whole of the admiration themselves—their fondness for attention and flattery being hereditary why should we condemn the poor things, let them enjoy it quietly—and provided your most adorable and angelic dulcina thinks your worship too *handsome*, why e'en leave her to please herself in choosing a companion from the herd of brutes that surround her.

After all you are a mere novice, for who, in the name of all that's wonderful, that had had half the experience with females you have, wou'd
stand

stand creeping and cringing, plotting and counter-plotting, to get a sight of her? — Why don't you advance boldly? — Tell her your time's too precious to be thrown away—that, notwithstanding you love her most violently, some little return is absolutely as necessary to keep thy flame alive as is the addition of fuel to the expiring embers, and that unless she will give some little reason to believe your assiduity is not entirely exerted in vain, you shall be oblig'd, though much against your inclination, to leave her for one of a kinder mould—if this does not move her to some confession, why she's not worth taking any farther trouble about.—

I would

I would then advise you to assume a dismal countenance, as it will not be consistent to leave her without, at least, some little appearance of regret, your cambric 'display'd, and with a piteous groan and heart-rending sigh, such as you tolerably well understand, bid her an everlasting farewell!

When you are once clear of the house, re-assume thy natural ease, fresh cock your hat, and with a martial stride take a general review of all the damsels round—if it should so happen that in all the giddy circle there does not chance to be one to your mind, change the scene of action

tion—march to this garden of beauty, where I think it is still in my power to put you in a method of securing snug winter quarters in a most inviting little fort that will not need much storming.

The young lady I mean to recommend is no less than a cousin of my amiable mistress', and, if I may be allowed to form any judgement from the similarity of their dispositions, you would reap as much pleasure by the possession of one as I experience with the other—besides, in taking up your abode with us we should form such a happy group, and live in that state of luxurious blifs, that kings might

might look from their gaudy thrones
with envy.

If this proposal meets with your
approbation send me a line directed
to the old place when I shall meet
you—do not stand hesitating but set
off immediately, and I'll insure you
success

What greater temptation can pos-
sibly be thrown in your way?—the
all-subduing endearments of a love-
inspiring wench, with the wanton god
playing in her eye and reveling in
her heart; and, at the same time,
an opportunity of enjoying all the
pleasures that attend the society of an
old

old companion—Egad such a bait, were it not for my infatuating little gipsy, would lure me to make a visit to the Antipodes—that it may have some weight, and prove sufficiently persuasive to induce you to leave the neglected train of a proud disdainful goddess for the chance of attaining the warm embraces of a condescending little divinity, is the most fervent wish of,

your sincere friend,

DERVILLE

LET

LETTER V.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

PRAY, my sober friend, what can you honestly think of yourself after sending me such a very modest epistle?—I had some inclination not to acknowledge the receipt of it, but supposing, although you are an odd soul, it was meant for my good, I thought myself bound to return you thanks for the trouble it must have cost—and by way of preventing such

good advice from being thrown away, in future, I can assure you that not one single particle in the whole composition will be complied with.

Do you suppose me turn'd arrant fool, or that I am mad—for no man sure, with a tolerable degree of understanding, having the means of happiness in his own possession would willingly resign them into the hands of another — self-denial, Tom, may be excellent doctrine, but it is entirely out of my system, take my word for it.

What! and so you wou'd have me put on a penitential countenance, fall
down

down on my marrow-bones, and in the most pathetic manner tell the undone wretch—what must I tell her?—O! now I have it—that being convinc'd what a heinous sin I had been guilty of, in drawing her into the path of wickedness, and how very iniquitous it was for us both to remain in it, I had resolv'd, and hoped she wou'd do the same, to bid adieu to our present diabolical proceedings and to end my days in repenting of what was already past—suppose I persuade her to go into a convent, and then turn friar myself!

Some little vindication, however, I find necessary, as you charge me

with seeking opportunities to seduce her, that being an act, above all others I most despise—No, Charlton, I still aver that I never projected a snare to entrap the unwary, or endeavoured to veil my designs with a view of drawing the chaste maiden from the pursuits of virtue—Miss Marnsdown was not of that number—she was always the giddy wanton—hurried on by a tide of impetuous passions, to which she paid implicit obedience, she threw herself open to the advances of all who came in her way, among which was your successful friend, and not being of the coldest disposition it was a temptation he could not withstand.

As.

As you are so well assur'd my present enjoyments will not be of any long duration, how can you possibly blame me for making the most of them while they do?—or, let me appeal to your own feelings, whether it would not be the height of folly to put an end to that from whence I derive so much satisfaction.

Mrs. Marnsdown, I grant, has ever been esteemed an excellent parent—however I cannot persuade myself but those very moral precepts which you so highly preach up, have been the sole means of poisoning that innate worth nature endow'd her daughters with—this may appear rather contra-

dictory at first, but when you reflect how infatuated she was to the doctrine of Mr. —, during her residence in town, one of whose profelytes she has been for many years, I am of opinion that greatest part of the absurdity of my assertion will vanish—I mean not to infer that all his followers must of necessity be worse than the rest of mankind, as there are, no doubt, worthy members in almost every sect—but where eternal perdition is unceasingly held forth as the certain punishment for having committed the slightest offence against his tenets, although it may have its due weight and depress the spirits of the aged, yet, from the frequent repetition, it becomes

becomes familiar to the young and thoughtless part of the congregation, who, instead of paying proper attention to the discourse, laugh and ridicule the outward sanctity of his converted saints—he has an excellent method to secure his flock from straying, by incessantly informing them, that all who do not strictly adhere to his principles are sure of everlasting condemnation.

These young ladies could scarcely speak when they were taken as constant attendants—no circumstance, at that time, was permitted as an excuse for their absence, so that of course, to judge from the nature of children,

they had a dislike to the place before they knew why they went—As their years encreased little stratagems were made use of to escape what had the appearance of punishment to them—this was the first state of intrigue—they soon learnt it was only contriving to be out of the way at meeting hours and there attendance was dispensed with; for though the old lady would compel them to go with her if to be found, yet they were not apprehensive of much anger after it was over.

Their scheming faculties being once in motion, and their plots generally meeting with success, no wonder if their ideas were carried much farther,
and

and that they gave full scope to their romantic fancies—Religion they now look'd on as a mere sound, and seldom attended but when they knew not how otherwise to amuse themselves, or to keep an assignation with some favourite spark—for which most pious employment there were always a sufficient number to keep them in countenance.

This, Sir, was their true situation when they left town—and it cannot be supposed that girls of their dispositions could be very strongly attach'd to the retirements of the country, being more under the old lady's eye and not having sufficient room
for

for the display of their genius.—Henrietta grew tired of being coop'd up under such formal government, long'd to shake off the yoke and live according to her own inclinations—in this distress I found her, and, as a duty incumbent on every adventurous knight, pledg'd my honour to release her from such cruel confinement—she accepted my services, surrendered to my protection, and I convey'd her to the palace of pleasure—and pray, Mr. Wiseacre, where's the harm of it.

And do you really imagine that, provided you had been intrusted with the secret, it would have been in thy power to have prevented my putting it

it

it into execution — what prodigious vanity some people have ! — that head of thine, Tom, was never intended to plot against me ; therefore take a little advice and do not attempt to counteract any of my schemes, for, depend upon it, the only honour you could ever gain would be similar to poor Flyaway's, that of coming in second best. .

I was not at all sorry for his grace's disappointment as it may be the means of weaning his fondness for the turf, though I am as well satisfied I was not with you at the time — aye ! there's another pretty piece of friendship — to wish me in the way of
the

the ill-natured old churl, and I suppose would have thought it excellent amusement to have seen me horse-whipp'd—but if I do not make a return for all your good wishes and prove myself to be thy match in friendship you may rest assured there is no spirit left in

your most oblig'd,

and very humble servant,

GEORGE DERVILLE.

I. E. T.

LETTER VI

LADY ARABELLA SPENCER,

TO

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN.

My Dear,

ALTHO' I am nearly jaded to death I cannot think of taking any rest before I have kept my promise, for maidens words, you know, are sacred—that is, with one another—as for the fellows, it is no matter what we say to them, it being only to deny that which we have no mind to remember, and making them, if they dare

dare murmur, ask pardon for accusing us of what, were the rights of it known, we had really and truly been guilty of—but this has nothing to do with the cause of my expedition to town, which you was to be acquainted with as soon as I knew myself—and still I promise the same, being just as wise about the matter now as when I made it before.

By their hurrying me from stage to stage I was apprehensive Sir William might be indisposed—however, on my arrival I had the pleasure of finding my fears were without foundation, he being as well as ever he was in his life.

Well,

Well, it don't signify—I shall know by and bye, I warrant—yet I hate to be kept in suspense—to be obliged to leave you, and all our agreeable party, without knowing why or wherefore—besides, Charlotte, it is a little vexatious to be forc'd away from one's avowed admirers, as it may be some time before I shall be able to collect a train of coxcombs that will flatter my vanity with equal facility—but do the best you can to keep the poor creatures in spirits, lest, in a fit of despair, they should fly to the neighbouring river and either exalt themselves upon one of the mournful willows, or yield to the embraces of the murmuring stream.

Now

Now I think of it, though I hope soon to be able to lend you my assistance, yet as I cannot tell, for certain, how long it will be first, they may as well, by way of amusement, endeavour to improve themselves—therefore, tell Mr. Buckle that we (mind I speak for myself and you too) shall like him full as well if he does not make his own sweet person, and ridiculous qualifications, so very often the topic of conversation, it being a matter of mere indifference to us what shape his coat is of, or how he decorates his—yes, his head; nor have we any particular desire to be made acquainted with his heroical exploits; however, as there are times in which,
from

from a relaxation of the spirits, the more trivial and insignificant the amusement, the greater the chance of its meeting with our approbation, (and I confess, for my own part, I shall always neglect the tricks of those “dear little miniatures of men,” for the no less ridiculous antics of the effeminate coxcomb) from which you may conclude he is in no great danger of being discarded, as I, most assuredly, shall always prefer him to a monkey—one principal reason for which is that by being deficient in cunning, he must, of course, be less mischievous.

Desire that wretch Willmore to be a little more humble and not quite so

boisterous as he has been of late, otherwise he shall be struck off the list without hesitation—if we give him the least encouragement he'll prove a scarecrow to the whole train—and who knows but we may then, having no other, be induced to pull caps even for him.

I don't know what we must do with Sparks—he begins to have far too much meaning in what he says—nay, the pulpit has not prevented him from being particular—I could almost find in my heart to have been the death of him that Sunday for addressing the whole of his Sermon to me, which I believe he did without
once

once taking his eyes off—but he shall do more than common penance before I sign his pardon.

Let me, however, my dear Charlotte, entreat you to teach that fellow Smith how to open his mouth, for we cannot possibly make any thing of him while he is so stupidly silent; besides, it looks as if he sat as a spy, and took account of whatever we said or did—if you cannot put some life into him he must certainly be dismiss'd, and I shall be sorry for that, because, if he was but a little more rational he would be one of my greatest favourites—nor shall you, positively, think serious about him un-

less he greatly mends his manners—
Then there is——but what the duce
am I perplexing myself about the
fellows for, when I am almost dead
with fatigue?—I will, therefore, put
an end to my scrawl with requesting
you to give my respectful compli-
ments to Mrs. Marnsdown, and be-
lieve me

your sincere

ARABELLA SPENCER.

LET-

LETTER VII.

CAPTAIN BRYDONE,

TO

LORD DERVILLE.

My Lord,

AT the same time I acknowledge how highly I estimate the value of your generous invitation, I find myself oblig'd, by the contrariety of my stars to decline the acceptance of it—this girl has got such strong possession, and affairs being rather in a flattering train, it is impossible to think of leaving them.

In my last I inform'd you of the success I had in attaining the good graces of the vicar, and having free admission to his house — but nevertheless I was still without any foundation to ground my success upon — I visited as frequently as I could with the least degree of decency, and every manœuvre, which I possess'd the least idea of, in the whole system of love, did I employ, in vain, against this little tyrant's heart.

Judging from what I had observ'd in the person who I mentioned had been here, I foolishly conceived it would be no difficult matter, if I put on the dying swain, to soften
her

her to my purpose; accordingly, whenever we were together, I assumed a melancholy countenance, kept my eyes continually fixed on her, and if, by chance, she observ'd me, cast them down with seeming confusion—a deep sigh would follow, half stifled if we were near each other—and never did I permit five minutes to elapse without making some wilful mistake, such as I naturally concluded would fully convince her she engrossed the whole of my attention—but I firmly believe I might have wept, sigh'd and groan'd till doomsday, without making any impression or exciting the least sensation of pity in her obdurate bosom.

Con-

Confoundedly piqued at my ill success, I resolved to try the excellent maxim of swearing a thousand extravagancies to the mother for the sake of the daughter—this had very near put an end to the whole business, for the old fool was so thoroughly persuaded of my passion and began to be so terribly fond, that I was fain to caution her against our being taken notice of—however, not to miss the promising advantage of her credulity I cursed the censorious world that would oblige me (by way of preventing their malicious scandal) to be absent many a tedious hour which I otherwise might have the happiness of spending with her, unless we could
form

form some plausible excuse for my visits—this bait had its desired effect, for, alarm'd at the idea of becoming the talk of the village, and unwilling to be deprived of my sweet company, she began to puzzle herself for a method to avoid both—after naming a number of puerile schemes which I was pretty certain were too insignificant to merit the least attention, I proposed offering myself as an admirer of Miss Lucy's, and that she should contrive to prevail on the parson and his daughter to receive me as such.

The old harridan at first appeared rather suspicious of my real intentions,

tions—but on convincing her it would be the means of our enjoying numberless opportunities of being alone, unnoticed by the busy world, she, at length, came into my proposal, and has actually recommended me to them both as a person every way worthy their acceptance.

My reception far exceeded my expectation, and I am confoundedly mistaken if the little plague, notwithstanding her shyness, has not a spice of inclination for Frank Brydone: on this supposition I build my hopes; if she has one latent spark in her breast, I'll gently fan it 'till it kindles to a flame, and then from its refulgence

gence reap celestial joys — to accomplish which neither art, pains, or attention shall be spar'd, as the possession of one of her delicate texture will be a full compensation for all the trouble I can possibly take.

With respect to the cruelty of seducing her from my rival I can only say every advantage is allowable in love and war—and so far from not doing as I would be done by, I am positive I should most readily excuse any man who was to serve me in the like manner.

After this intimation I leave it for you, my Lord, to determine whether,

ther (make the case your own) it wou'd not be folly to give up the pursuit—as it is plain the whole tendency of your proposal is merely for my interest, I flatter myself you will not attribute my non-acceptance to any want of respect, for sincerely wishing your round of pleasures may be of a long continuance I remain, my Lord, your Lordship's,

most obedient,

humble servant,

FRANK BRYDÖNE.

LET

LETTER VIII.

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON,

T O

LORD DERVILLE.

Derville,

THIS morning I received the inclosed note from your Lordship's father, and have taken the first opportunity of forwarding it you—at least put it in that line of conveyance which your high mightiness has so far condescended to leave open for me to transmit that intelligence I may wish to communicate.

Upwards

Upwards of a month have I been in town, and frequently called at St. James's Coffee-house, in hopes of meeting or acquiring some account of you—but all the information I could learn was, that your servant came, as usual, for what letters were left, but they could not tell whether you was in town or country—I believe there has not been, 'till within this six months, three days, at one time, for this dozen years, but what I knew where to have applied personally, which I certainly should have done at present had it been possible to develop thy secret abode—but thou art so very sagacious!—To tell you the truth, George, I have made but
little

little enquiry about the matter, not wishing to pry farther into private affairs than what is quite agreeable to the parties and their permission authorizes.

I do not mean to cast the least reflection for being excluded your society, as I am conscious that trivial subjects must submit to those of more consequence, and, of course, the approaches of friendship must give way to the dalliance of a mistress.

To-morrow I mean to set off for Charlton-hall, where I hope soon to hear of our renegade's return, not only to his friends, but to that line
of

of conduct which gained him the esteem and friendship of all who had happiness of being in the number of his acquaintance, nor the least proud of that honour was

his sincere friend,

THOMAS CHARLTON.

P. S. I hope it is needless for me to remind you how necessary it is for you to acquiesce with his grace of G's. request.

I. E. T.

LETTER IX.

DUKE OF G——.

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

(Inclosed in the Preceding.)

Sir,

AS you are one of the principal companions of my stupid fellow of a son, I make no doubt of its being in your power, (although I am excluded from knowing where he is to be found) to inform the half-witted coxcomb that I want to see him on a matter of consequence, therefore

expect he will call on me in the course of a day or two—it being entirely for his own advantage, you may tell him if he does not pay attention to this he never need to expect any future favour from,

your's, &c.

G—.

LET-

LETTER X.

LADY ARABELLA SPENCER,

TO

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN.

My dear Charlotte,

WITHOUT being a conjuror, or even necessitated to put my little wits to work, have I got to the bottom of this great and wonderful business—guess, my sweet friend; guess what it can be—you can't!—well, never mind, I'll tell you—but promise to be secret—you do!—now for it then:

H. 2

No.

No person will attempt to deny but what Sir William is a prudent, sagacious, considerate kind of man; as an additional proof of it, perceiving his daughter begin to grow a little unruly, or, at least, apprehensive she might very soon be so, he has been looking out for a person better calculated to manage her than himself—having met with one to his liking, he means to shew his approbation of the poor fellow by presenting him with a plague he has no longer courage to keep under his own government—What an everlasting obligation is he going to confer!—I fancy the spark will soon be made sensible of his blessing!

To

To be sure I had the affair represented in a quite different manner; for, after a long preamble, he told me, that having been consulting for my future happiness — how should he know what will make me happy? — and altho' he felt great regret at the thought of parting, yet sensible that he must expect the time would come when I should be tired of his authority and wish to command myself, and as the Duke of G. had made proposals for his son, it would be some consolation in having me connected to a family that would do me honour; he therefore hoped I would receive him as the person to whom it was his desire to see me united.

Not much liking the idea of being turned over to a fellow I knew nothing of, I began to meditate an opposition—but after a little hesitation told him I was perfectly contented and happy in my present situation, and hop'd he would not oblige me to hazard the loss of that felicity by entering into a state I had never thought seriously about.

Instead of meeting with a reply agreeable to my wishes, he said that I gave him a deal of pleasure, for he had been apprehensive I might have contracted some silly attachment; but since I had confess'd my affections were entirely free, he could not be
accused

accused with having acted in contradiction to my inclinations—and he did not doubt but Lord Derville, who was a fine young fellow, would soon make himself as agreeable as any other.

Thus, my dear, was the matter settled—and in the course of a few days am I to receive this Derville in form—I recollect he was once pointed out to me but quite forget what sort of an animal it is—Would his visit was over, for it is a most awkward piece of business!—yet I am half crazy to see what kind of a lord and master this prudent papa of mine has allotted me to have.

H 4

I am

I am sure the men who meet with such considerate parents ought to be very thankful, for when they are left to our capricious whims they are sure to meet with a repulse, notwithstanding we may long to fly into their arms—whereas, when they come under the sanction of a father, they approach our divinities in full security, certain of what the answer must be—*must*, Charlotte! — what an aggravating monosyllable for,

your affectionate,

ARABELLA SPENCER.

LET

LETTER XI.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

LET who will say to the contrary,
I affirm that thou, Tom Charlton,
art one of the worthiest fellows in
the kingdom; and I, George Derville,
the most fortunate dog breathing—
the letter, you rogue!—for ever in
luck's way—when I am too much
engaged to look out or contrive for
myself, some civil and obliging friend
generally stands forth to start fresh
game

game for me. — Now, according to the established opinion of the wise and miserable, I must be a fool—fools being the favourites of Fortune—be that as it may, I am heartily pleased that Nature did not constitute me one of those sober, grave, thinking animals, who are continually tormenting themselves, not with those mischances which really do occur, but by their quick penetration into what may—from all which kind of anxiety I am generally free; being too good a Christian, or, if you like it best, as I before observed, too great an ass, to take any heed of to-morrow, leaving that, as we are commanded, to provide for itself.

As

As you are a suspicious kind of a gentleman and may be induced to imagine I am romancing, and that there is no person sufficiently my friend to provide me a mistress—I'll give you immediate demonstration which will prove all such thoughts are malicious and ill-founded.

To proceed in order—I must first acquaint you that Miss Marnsdown, for some little time back, had taken a freak into her head to accuse me of neglect, and upbraid me with there being a visible diminution in my esteem—though, upon my honour, I am totally ignorant of there being the least alteration in my behaviour,

nor

nor had I the least reason for making any—however as she had cherish'd the idea that it was so, there was no possibility of convincing her to the contrary—I will not assert that I made use of many arguments to induce her to change such an opinion but rather chose to bear her upbraidings with the greatest calmness—my resignation and apparent indifference enraged her so much that, at times, she would fly into the most violent passions—yet my fortitude was always too stable to suffer the least shock from her most formidable attacks.

We were engaged, or rather she was, for I never take an active part
in

in these entertaining tête-à-tête's, when the servant brought me your note with that of his grace's—without paying any attention to the pointed force and beautiful diction of the lady's harangue, I perused the letters nor could I refrain smiling on reading his curious epistle—this was a most dreadful insult, for, either construing my smiles to be in contempt of her elocution, or aggravated to the highest pitch by my taking so little notice of her complaints, she threw herself into the most desperate agitation.

I was greatly alarm'd at her situation, and it was with much difficulty I brought

brought her to herself—before she was thoroughly recovered she fell in the same track; wherefore, perceiving her resolved to be outrageous I conceived it would be most prudent to make a retreat—when taking my hat, with all the composure imaginable, I sedately walked off, leaving the lady to reap the benefit of her engaging amusement.

Thus, as I may say, driven from home and without the least kind of engagement, I thought I might as well make a merit of attending his grace's summons—by good luck he happened to be at home and received me with more than ordinary civility,

civility, passing great encomiums on my ready obedience—nor did he suffer me to remain long in ignorance of the business that had required my attendance, which was neither more nor less than his having match'd me to run over the beaten course of matrimony with General Spencer's young filly, Arabella; who he assured me was as nice a tit as ever man need look upon—Being fully resolv'd from the first to appear all submission, I told him, with a sanctified countenance, that I had long been convinc'd of his care and attention for my good, and that unless, on an interview with the lady, there appeared some material reason for an objection, (which
he

he should be convinc'd was not the offspring of any capricious motive) I should hold myself ready to obey his commands—I hope there's to be no crossing or jostling.

The old gentleman was quite in raptures at my condescension—took me by the hand and almost surfeited me with commendations, that being a regalement I had not experienced at his hands for many a day—nor was your humble servant much less pleased at the idea of having a sanction for toying with a smart wench—old I am certain she can't be—ugly I am told she is not—therefore so she has some spirit and not addicted to prudery
she

she will find me very much at her service—and as the violence of Henrietta's temper would undoubtedly prevent our connection from being of any long duration it will be an excellent excuse for bringing it to a conclusion.

To-morrow am I to be led to the General's for the lady's inspection—or for me to examine her ladyship—or, most likely, for both—this business is transacted far too methodically to meet with my hearty concurrence, but that being a circumstance I cannot prevent, it must be pass'd over as unworthy notice and of no signification.

Should the girl prove above mediocrity I shall thank my stars for influencing the old gentleman to put me in the way of her; as I have the vanity to think, so partial am I to the whole sex, that I could make almost any woman happy that appeared solicitous to render me so—but if, after the ceremony, she proves the contrary, it will be the means of forcing me to comply with the rage of the times, and, by having separate habitations, to live like other people of fashion.

your's, as usual,

DERVILLE.

LET

LETTER XII.

LADY ARABELLA SPENCER,

TO

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN.

HOW different, Charlotte, do most things prove in reality to what we had form'd in imagination! — this visit of Derville's I apprehended would have been of a very disagreeable nature—my situation appearing somewhat similar to being exposed for public inspection before the day of sale, but now it is over I think nothing of the matter—would you

believe the fellow could have had the assurance, notwithstanding it was his first appearance, to give the preference and actually address another lady before my face—however inconsistent this may appear I can assure you it is a fact—I was no way mortified by not being the first object of my lover's attention, as it was the means of my escaping a most immoderate inundation of nonsense, which he pour'd upon Lady Betty Stanmore without any mercy—She had but just come in when the sweet creature was announc'd—on which she would fain have taken her leave, but I insisted on her staying a little, and ordered the servant to shew his Lordship up; with

with all my heroism I was greatly embarrassed and could not bear the thought, now the moment was arrived, of receiving him alone, therefore was pretty strenuous in pressing her not to leave me.

General compliments being over he applied himself to Lady Betty, who, fortunately for me, he mistook for my Ladyship, and without allowing her time to undeceive him, ran through such a catalogue of love phrases, in which he appears tolerable conversant, that he put the poor girl quite out of countenance; apologizing, at the same time, for taking such liberty in my presence, but

I 3 hop'd

hop'd when I was convinc'd of the ardency of his esteem that would be sufficient to plead his excuse.

Having recovered from that timidity which his entrance had thrown me in, I was highly diverted with the scene, and pleased myself with the hopes that he would depart without discovering his mistake — Lady Betty being, at length, unable to withstand the profusion of compliments he unremittingly lavished on her, arose, begg'd I would excuse her, and wish'd me good morning.

It would be the height of folly in me to attempt a description of the

con-

confusion which immediately took possession of his countenance — for some moments we remained silent, I enjoying his embarrassment and ready to laugh at his simple appearance, while he appeared so totally disconcerted that he knew not in what manner to proceed — but recollecting, I suppose, that without a beginning we might sit for seven years and be in much the same dilemma, after twirling and twisting his hat, first playing with the button and then with the loop, he attempted to speak—yes, my dear, he only attempted, for it was with the greatest difficulty imaginable that he could bring out the words, “I hope, madam,” when his

mouth was immediately closed and silence again ensued.

However, possessing some resolution he made a second attempt; this effort proved far more successful than the former, having gained courage sufficient to approach me, and in the most humiliating manner entreated I would pardon a mistake his not having the honour to be personally acquainted had occasioned him to fall into; assuring me he had heard the Duke of G. speak so much in my favour he came prepared to adore me, and that he should be the happiest of human creatures in paying obedience to his commands.

“ To

“To judge, my Lord, from what
 “I have seen, and been an ear witness
 “to, I can only attribute this com-
 “pliment to the respect you have
 “for his grace of G’s. importu-
 “nities.”

“I protest, madam.”

“No, I beseech you will not—for
 “you certainly have made protesta-
 “tions sufficient for one day.”

“Certainly, my dearest madam,
 “you must allow the Lady who has
 “just left us, and with whom I was
 “led into this unintentional error,
 “possesses attractions that would de-
 “mand

“mand respect from all mankind—
“how then, as I came prepossessed
“in favour of those internal qualifi-
“cations of which I have frequently
“heard you so rapturously admired
“for, could I be otherwise than re-
“joiced on supposing them united to
“such an agreeable person—though
“my heart, at the same time, forcibly
“acknowledged thy superiority, but
“conscious of my own insignificancy
“I dar’d not look up to such per-
“fection—being, however, so far fa-
“voured by heaven to have this op-
“portunity of declaring how far you
“have captivated my heart, let me
“entreat you will, for the future,
“accept its tenderest services.”

“By

“By no means, my Lord—having
 “myself heard your professions to
 “my friend, I can never consent to
 “encourage your inconstancy, and
 “that too the very moment she is
 “out of sight.”

“Those professions, dear Lady,
 “were, in fact, address’d to you—
 “as I acknowledged my esteem to be
 “founded on those amiable qualifi-
 “cations that you, and I might say
 “you alone, possess.”

“This, my Lord, as mere gallan-
 “try, and though it may be a proof
 “of your politeness is none of your
 “veracity—In obedience to the plea-
 “sure

“ sure of Sir William I have receive
“ your visit and shall ever remain
“ sensible of the honour.”

“ Permit me to hope, madam, that
“ notwithstanding our acquaintance
“ originates from his injunctions, a
“ cultivation of it will not be totally
“ disagreeable to yourself.”

“ Lord Derville’s acquaintance is
“ too great an honour to be con-
“ temn’d, but must beg leave to de-
“ cline all thoughts beyond it—I shall
“ always consider myself entirely at
“ Sir William’s disposal, and he has
“ ever approv’d himself too tender a
“ parent to allow me the least room
“ to

“suspect he will be otherwise in that
 “part of his conduct which, in my
 “opinion, demands his greatest af-
 “fection.”

“Dare I, without meriting your
 “displeasure, assume the liberty to
 “enquire whether some happy youth
 “hath not already rendered himself
 “sufficiently agreeable to engage
 “your affections?”

“I know no reason, my Lord,
 “why I should hesitate to answer
 “you—there is not—and, at this mo-
 “ment, I hold myself entirely free
 “from any prepossession in favour
 “of any one living.”

“And

“And may I hope, my dear Lady,
“I should not be refused admittance
“if I ventured to wait on you!”

“I am never denied to Sir Wil-
“liam’s friends.”

He was full of acknowledgments for the prospect of happiness which he said my condescension had given him, and pestered me with as many vows and protestations as if he had been really captivated—more, indeed; Diffidence being always a constant attendant on Love—yet you must not suppose him entirely without some signs of the lover either, for he put on such languishing looks and sighed
so

so piteously that I was once induc'd to ask if he was indisposed, but soon found my gentleman was not to be trifled with, being keen as a hawk, watching for the moment to seize his unguarded prey.

“Well, but what do you plague
“me with all this nonsense for! why
“don't you tell me what sort of a
“person he is—what colour his hair
“and eyes are of—what kind of teeth
“lips, legs and arms he has got?
“that being much more material
“than either what was said or done.”

So it may, Charlotte, but that is a kind of intelligence you are not likely to receive from me—wherefore if thy
curiosity

curiosity should happen to rage very strong, I would advise you to come to town and let it be satisfied—which if you do I shall not be surprised to see him kneeling at your feet and offering up vows of adoration, for it is my real opinion he is of such a tinder composition that it catches fire at every pair of bright eyes he chances to meet—don't let the fear of robbing me of my swain prevent your coming as the pleasure I should experience by the company of my friend would far overbalance the pain I should feel at the loss of my lover..

Adieu !

ARABELLA SPENCER.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

Dear Tom,

ACCORDING to the information I gave you of my intended visit I repaired to the General's, arm'd at all points to insure a conquest — but whether Fortune was resolv'd to punish my presumption in boasting myself her favourite son; or that my evil genius owed me a grudge for being so confident; or, as some good souls

settle matters of this kind, that it was to be; or from what other cause I will not attempt to determine, but certain it is I stumbled into a blessed mistake.

The servant ushered me into the drawing room, where I was received by two young ladies, neither of whom had I ever seen before, so that it was impossible to tell which was the lovely she design'd for my help-mate; after bowing and scraping, during which ceremony I thought one of them most certainly would assume the pre-eminence from being at home, but nothing of that kind visibly appearing, I reconnoitered them both, and pos-
sessing

possessing a tolerable idea of my own perception, made no doubt but I had discovered her; therefore, without the least hesitation, began the attack by swearing her personal accomplishments, added to the fame of her good sense, sweetness of disposition, and benevolence of mind, had so entirely enslaved my heart that I must live and die an enthusiast to her merit—Scarce had I concluded one of the best speeches I ever made in my life, when the Lady gave me to understand, by rising and taking leave, I had made a pretty blunder, and had been actually calling upon my appointed mistress to bear witness of my promises to another.

I was so curfedly confounded at finding what an unlucky piece of business I had made of it, that for some time I could not resolve in what manner to proceed—I was, at first, for making an abrupt departure and leaving matters just as they were; then recollecting what a ridiculous figure I should cut put such thoughts quite out of my head—while I was thus debating with myself, the little gipsy sat, with a malicious pleasure in her eyes, visibly enjoying my embarrassment—this, however, had a good effect in the end, for my pride took the alarm at a girl's having so much the ascendancy over one who was not very guilty of being out of countenance,

nance, when all my happy confidence
return'd, and I soon felt that

Presence of mind, and courage in distress,
Are more than armies to procure success :

for by swearing a thousand things I
never thought of, and vouching to an
immoderate number of lies, I pre-
vailed on her to believe that all the
protestations she had heard me profess
to the other were, in reality, address'd
to herself—yet, Charlton, I wish from
my soul I had not been mistaken, for
there is that delicate softness in the
features and affability of manner in
this Lady which plainly indicates the
virtues of her mind, while Lady
Arabella, who is beyond comparison
the finest woman, has all that fire and

vivacity that you have heard me condemn as the certain signs of a wanton heart—but as I generally turn to the white side of most occurrences wherein I am concern'd, I even look on this as a tolerable lucky circumstance—if it is entered in the book of fate, to which our fathers have endeavoured to persuade us, that we are to become man and wife, why the more ready she is to comply, the less trouble shall I have in courting her to it—and, as the old gentlemen, in all likelihood, will be for bringing us to the starting post as soon as the fellows of the long robe can adjust all necessary preliminaries, there will be little or no danger of her playing
off

off her coquettish airs either to me or in any other quarter.

Having prolong'd my stay to near two hours I left her, pretty well satisfied with the encouragement I had received; being equal to what I could have expected even from a visit free of such an unlucky beginning — it would have been prevented had not some of the jockeying tribe called on Sir William and compell'd him to go out, he having promis'd to wait at home on purpose to introduce me to his daughter.

No sooner was I by myself than my thoughts turn'd on Henrietta;

it was contradictory to all reason to think of continuing a connection that would be attended with so many disagreeable circumstances—a discovery, even at present, is what, for her sake, I could wish by all means, if in my power, to prevent.

Were I to relate the alteration there is in this once amiable girl, you might suppose I was mean enough to accuse her merely for an excuse to shake her off—but believe me, Charlton, instead of that engaging manner in which she strove to give pleasure and content, I now meet with nothing but eternal noise, sighs and tears, which indeed may be attributed to her love, and

and assigned as incontrovertible proofs of her affection—it is a confounded disagreeable way of shewing her affection, let me tell you, and what would most undoubtedly have separated us even had nothing else intervened.

Think not, my friend, I am so depraved as you once hinted to leave her a prey to poverty and shame—no; I mean to place her in a state of independance, where she may, if she'll take your advice, live in peace and repent at leisure.—The small freehold in Leicestershire, which was left me by my Lady G. shall be settled on her for life—that may be accomplished

plished without subjecting her to the least suspicion, as I already enjoy too good a character for the assertion of a mortgage to meet with the least discredit.

Fixed in my resolution I went in in the evening and found her, as I partly expected, very much distressed at my absence—from our first being together I never before left her for above three or four hours at a time, and now I had been away for two days—I was greatly hurt at seeing her in that situation and exerted all the rhetoric I was possess'd of to soothe her uneasiness, which, with much difficulty, I effected—I was so
over-

overpowered by her unhappy appearance and the tenderness with which she received me, that to have gained an empire I could not have mentioned the least word of my intention.

After ruminating on the actual necessity there was for my bringing this affair to a conclusion, and as I could perceive no advantage would accrue from prolonging it, I determined to open the matter to her as soon as the breakfast apparatus should be taken away in the morning—Being left together, I, with all the tenderness and delicacy that her situation demanded, began to descant on the nature of our connection—She heard me patiently

tiently for some time, but when I gave as my opinion that we ought to put an end to such proceedings, anger, fury, and despair, those ready attendants on the jealous mind, rush'd in to her assistance—She rav'd, wept, and upbraided by turns, till her spirits were quite exhausted, a faintness succeeded, and she sunk back in her chair—I waited her recovery with great anxiety, yet hop'd, as the first torrent of her passion was over, she might be prevailed on to listen with more calmness, as I did not doubt but I should be able to paint our present manner of living in such hideous colours that should make her detest the very thoughts of a continuation.

No VI

She

She sat with seeming composure and permitted me to proceed without any interruption till I mentioned the settlement; upon which her whole frame shook and a flood of tears fell from her eyes—at length assuming a supercilious air, she said she could see through all my art—it was only a specious design to cast her off that I might the more easy be the destruction of some other credulous fool—but I might rest satisfied that if it was in her power to prevent I never should accomplish my ends—she would follow me as a shadow—expose my villainy to the world, and by that means protect the innocence it was my intention to destroy.

Most

Most part of the day was spent in fruitless altercation, and the more condescension was shewn on my side the more inflexible was she to all persuasion—no longer able to bear patiently her unmerited upbraidings, I told her that her own levity was more blameable for having left her mother's house than any arguments I had used to persuade her—that it was as much for her own pleasure as mine—and I knew no reason why I should be obligated to continue a connection that both honour and justice demanded I should relinquish—I had offered that which would make her independent of the world, and if she was so far blind to her own credit and interest

as

as to remain obstinate in the refusal I should leave her to pursue that line of conduct which was most agreeable to her refractory temper.

The determined manner in which I delivered this seemed to have some effect and she remained silent—as there appeared no likelihood of our coming to any better terms, after acquainting her I would call again in the course of a week to know her final determination, I quitted the house with sensations totally different to what I ever before experienced—the hours of felicity I had enjoyed with her came rushing to my mind—I recollected how oft she had been assiduous to give me
pleasure

pleasure—her tendernefs—her affection, which was too vifible in the agitation occafioned by my forfaking her. O, Tom ! who could behold fuch a lovely girl o'erwhelm'd with grief and not wifh to affift in relieving her !—to be the fpectator of diftrefs, and confcious of being the fole occafion of it, is furely the greateft torture a human breaft can feel—for my part——but a truce with fuch nonfence ! and a truce with writing, here being a fufficient quantity of fecrets to convince you I am as much as ever

your fincere friend,

GEORGE DERVILLE.

LET

LETTER XIV.

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN,

TO

LADY ARABELLA SPENCER.

HOW enviable are you, my dear Bella, in still retaining that enchanting flow of spirits which was ever the delight of your friends—I should have thought the fatigue of a journey, together with the expectation of being forc'd into bondage for life, would certainly have had sufficient weight to depress them, but it is with the greatest satisfaction I find it the contrary

trary—though perhaps I was mistaken in supposing a compliance with Sir William's proposition would be a kind of punishment, for to follow the old adage of, no news being good news, must naturally conclude, as you started no objection, you are of the old gentleman's way of thinking and pleased with his choice — which is more than I am, as I shall always hate the fellow for depriving me of the happiness I enjoyed in your charming society—I was terribly apprehensive, at first, for fear he had selected out some insignificant wretch, and might have insisted on sacrificing the peace of my sweet friend to satisfy one of his capricious whims.

It is impossible to tell what will be the consequence when the poor creatures you have left in captivity are made acquainted with the cause of your going to town—they are continually buzzing about me, and say they exist only in the pleasing hopes of your speedy return—I have not yet dropt the least hint for them to suppose the contrary—indeed I am afraid least it should drive them to despair, and induce them to commit an act of desperation.

I must tell you, Bellâ, you are a very unfriendly teasing girl, or endeavoured to be so and that is every bit as bad, in denying me a descrip-

tion of this Lord of your's—I expected to have had his person so exactly delineated that I should not have needed an interview to enable me to give my opinion of him, instead of which you positively refuse all kind of information that might lead me to guess at him should he come in my way—but to prove that I do not resent such ill-treatment and that I am of a far better disposition than you (mind that) I'll send you the portrait of a gentleman who is an acquaintance of mine, and beg you will indulge me with your opinion of it as soon as you can find leisure to think a little seriously on so trifling a subject.

First

First then, observe I draw from nature, he is somewhat above the middle stature, tolerably well proportioned, and by possessing an infinite degree of ease in his carriage his person is rendered superior to most; in his manner he is unaffectedly polite, possessing a vivacity that leads him to liberties, yet seldom offends; beauty you know, Bella, is of little or no signification in a man, but if an exact symmetry of features with a fine arch'd brow and remarkable bright eyes are any recommendation he need not be at a loss.

I think, unless I am a shocking artist indeed, you will perceive some

kind of similarity between my picture and your sovereign that is to be; if not my memory has not done justice to my genius—my own praise I must and will have.

However to save you the trouble of puzzling and perplexing yourself to know how I should be so well acquainted with a person design'd for such an honour, this very Lord Der-ville was an admirer of my poor lost sister—and I can assure you our suspicions would have fell on him only we were pretty certain she had not seen him for near two months before her elopement, though till that time they were continually together.

As

As I had frequently been a spectator of his lordship's vagaries you may conclude I was no way surpris'd at his assurance in addressing you notwithstanding what had pass'd with Lady Betty—poor young Lady! what a mortifying situation for her—as for his part I don't suppose it would have made the least difference had there been twenty more in the room—tho' from his appearing so abash'd it would almost induce me to believe he is not quite so bad as represented, for I have heard him held forth as one of the greatest libertines in the kingdom.

If, and I cannot help thinking so, he is the very man that is ordain'd to

ensnare the heart of my poor Bella,
I hope her attractions will prove sufficiently forcible to keep him from rambling, and that he may endeavour, by his constancy to her, to make some compensation to the sex for the many he has already deceived, is the first and most fervant prayer that is put up by

your truly affectionate,

C. MARNSDOWN.

LET.

LORD DERVILLE. 453

LETTER XV.

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON,

TO

LORD DERVILLE.

IN my opinion, Derville, thou art certainly under the influence of the moon, and, at times, not in thy proper senses—should I perceive this disorder encrease, or that you do not experience a speedy recovery, I shall write to his Lordship to try the effects of a strait waistcoat—for if thy brain was not touch'd you would never act in the present manner—

If

If, however, you wish to have me think the contrary, let me know what you expect will be the end of your extravagant proceedings; and provided I find you have been led on from good motives, I shall be happy in making concessions for my hasty judgement.

I cannot believe, notwithstanding your assertions, that you have any real thoughts of marrying Lady Arabella—I have ever found you of too open and candid a disposition to suppose you capable of writing with so much seeming indifference concerning a Lady for whom there existed the least esteem, and surely, unless

thou

thou art very far gone indeed, you never will hazard the loss of your eternal happiness by being united to one Lady while you give the preference to another—perhaps you have thought it beneath a man of taste to reflect on the future consequences, or intend merely to play the fool with her as you have done with numbers before; if so, may you experience all the stings of disappointment, as the only means of bringing you to a true sense of your folly.

You are no stranger to the impetuosity of his Grace of G's. disposition, nor to what a height he will carry his resentment for mere trifles, having

having frequently been the object of both—what then ought you to expect when he finds himself disappointed after being taught to believe that you were highly pleased with his choice, and instead of having attention paid to his commands you had only been diverting yourself at his expence—If my conjectures are not without foundation, let me entreat you to give him room, by your behaviour, to doubt the sincerity of thy intentions, which will most likely give you an opportunity to break off the match without appearing to be the sole occasion—though I confess you are the last person I ought to advise in cases of this kind, being so

infinitely

infinitely my superior when you allow yourself to be governed by your judgement—but to decline an opportunity of toying with a pretty girl is too great a punishment for George Derville to inflict on himself.

I hope your present disagreeable situation with Miss Marnsdown will prevent your taking any unwarrantable liberties with Lady Arabella, as such an affair with that family would not be so easily terminated as it may with the present.

Since matters are gone so far with poor Henrietta, who I pity from my soul, I hope she will accept of your
proposal,

propofal, for as ſhe cannot now return with any degree of credit to her friends, ſuch a retirement is the only place ſhe can expect to meet with happinefs.—Although I partly foretold the uneaſinefs that ſuch a connection was likely to produce, yet I rather ſuppoſed it would ariſe from your inſtancy than any juſt cauſe of complaint againſt her.

A few days ago, being out for a ride, I called at Mrs. Marnsdown's, and found the old Lady in high ſpirits, her daughter's imprudence did not appear to concern her in the leaſt, though ſhe ſeveral times hinted that ſhe was not unacquainted with the
perſon

person who had enticed her to commit such a crime, but that she should leave him to the tortures of a guilty conscience, and his punishment to the wise disposer of all things—in the course of our conversation she told me her distress at first was almost insupportable, but that Mr. W—— came and pour'd the balm of comfort on her afflicted spirit—he had likewise so pathetically represented what a sin it was to grieve even for a child when they deviated from the path of the faithful, that she should for the remainder of her days look on it as a mark of divine favour that she was found an object worthy so afflicting a trial.

Since

Since this venerable shepherd has
acquir'd the art of convincing his
followers that the misfortunes in life
are, in reality, blessings, I am some-
what of an opinion that he will have
an addition to his flock in

your sincere friend,

THOMAS CHARLTON.

L. E. T.

Since this venerable shepherd has
acquired the art of convincing his

LETTER XVI.

in reality, I am some-

LORD DERVILLE,

an addition to his

Cupid has received orders in his

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

—once corrected—

and what was new

WELL, to say with my old
friend Shakespeare, “thus men grow
wiser and wiser every day,” for who
could have suspected that Sir Thomas
Charlton would ever entertain the
idea of turning fanatic—though, by
the bye, yours is a kind of puritani-
cal face—yet I have a shrewd suspi-
cion there must be something more
persuasive to bring about this conver-
sion

sion than either the wisdom of the venerable shepherd, or Mrs. Marnsdown's balm of comfort—but you are as close fist'd as a Jew—in love matters I mean—to be sure this same Cupid has atchieved wonders in his time—made conquerors slaves—cowards valiant—wise men fools—and may make you a faint—but curse me if I either like the scheme or think you will gain any advantage by it, therefore I'll not trouble myself about the success but leave you to the guidance of your own bright parts.

If I was not one of the most condescending, best temper'd creatures in the whole world, I should have
found

found myself so much offended by your last epistle never to have held correspondence with you again—but being of such an humble, diffident disposition I went immediately into a kind of self-examination—cathechised myself with the utmost rigour, to be satisfied whether I was really mad or no, and on finding my answers justly corroborate from one end of the chapter to the other, I dare venture to return for answer that I hold myself ready and willing—“willing!”—yes, willing; what do you make of that?—to obey his Grace in being united to Lady Arabella Spencer as soon as our fathers, lawyers, milliners, taylors, &c. &c. &c. can complete

the necessary preparations.—Now are you satisfied?—if not, order thy horses to the chaise and drive off to town, where you will soon stand a chance of beholding your poor friend offered up a sacrifice, at the shrine of Hymen, to all the vicissitudes of matrimonial comforts.

Notwithstanding all your pretended sanctity, Charlton, you are certainly a very sad fellow at the bottom, otherwise you could never have thought of putting me in mind to act in contradiction to the authoritative commands of a father—such blessed advice was needless, as I am sufficiently prone to opposition; but in the present case

it is more than I dare attempt—tho'

I freely confess my acquiescence is

neither from a particular *pencbant* for

the Lady, nor a voluntary obedience

to his Grace—my future existence de-

pends solely on his will, therefore am

I obliged to submit—sensible of which

can I be discommended in endeavour-

ing to render it as agreeable as pos-

sible—She is a very fine woman, and

mistress of many amiable qualifica-

tions, yet I do not find myself so

particularly attached to her as I could

wish to be to the female allotted for

my helpmate—nevertheless we may

be happy, and pass through life with

a tolerable degree of content—if not

it will certainly be early enough to

pour forth our complaints when we find it otherwise.

I am almost continually with her; have been pretty attentive with respect to her general behaviour, and scrutinized, with all the penetration I am master of, into the natural tenets of her disposition—and although, from my observations, I have little doubt that were I to lay strong siege the fort would surrender at discretion, yet it is my firm opinion that I should acquire the conquest more from her admiration of coquetry than from any innate principle of lasciviousness; did I think the contrary, or had I any substantial reason for apprehending

ing

ing a life of uneasiness would be the consequence of our connection, notwithstanding all my boasted obedience I should make bold to object to their proposals even at the hazard of my expectations.

Yet, betwixt you and I, Tom, it would be impossible to part with the wench now without some little consolation—I will leave it to you, who art so very consciencious, whether, after being sensibly convinc'd of the sweets of paradise you could calmly resign all thoughts of them!—would you not strain every nerve to attain the possession, and sacrifice every other consideration to accom-

plish that one point?—"Granted."—
Well then you may rest assured that
I, your friend, George Derville,
having tasted the ambrosial sweetness
of Arabella's lips—for she kisses di-
vinely—will never suffer her beauties,
though at the hazard of his life, to
be rifled by any other—lawfully, if
it must be so, but at any rate she
shall be mine—Indeed there is no
great reason to apprehend any danger
at present, for matters go on swim-
mingly and without my assistance, as
the only part I take in the affair is
to play with the Lady, and I don't
recollect having ever met a pretty
girl but with whom I should have
been highly delighted at being ap-
pointed

pointed to such a bewitching employment.

The old gentlemen are in high spirits at the ready obedience of their children, for her Ladyship is not a whit less dutiful than your humble servant.

I find I had but little favour to have expected from his Grace had I prov'd otherwise, as he very candidly told me yesterday, that he was very glad I lik'd the girl, having set his mind on the match, and that he should certainly have discarded me if I had made the least objection—to which I replied :

“ I

“I always entertain’d too high an
 “opinion of your Grace’s judgement
 “to think what you said was proper
 “to be done needed the least inves-
 “tigation.”

“You are an hypocritical scoundrel
 “and I half suspect now you mean
 “to make a fool of me.”

“My Lord, I am sorry——”

“Aye, you dog, how many times
 “in your life have I heard you say
 “so, and yet within five minutes have
 “known you purposely do something
 “you was certain would give me of-
 “fence—But now, Sir, take notice
 “of

“of what I say—every body must be
 “sensible that I have been a much
 “more indulgent father than you ever
 “deserv’d.”

“There’s not a doubt of that, my
 “Lord.”

“Don’t be aggravating, George,
 “but hear what I say to you—being
 “quite griev’d at your manner of
 “proceeding——”

“Your Lordship’s too good.”

“Why, there now!—is there any
 “possibility of speaking to such an
 “impertinent puppy!—But, hark’e,

“Mr.

“ Mr. Jack-an-apes, the matter stands
“ thus, if you make any prevarication
“ about marrying this Lady, or at-
“ tempt to play any of your dog’s
“ tricks, I’ll marry her myself, get
“ another son, and disinherit you, you
“ scoundrel, for your impudence.”

Thus ended our dialogue, for he
march’d off leaving me to meditate
on his threats—What a formidable
rival, Tom! —I could almost wish
him to have her, only it would be a
shame such a delicate morsel should
be condemn’d to the mumbling of
threescore, which shall not be if there’s
any spirit left in

GEORGE DERVILLE.

L. E. T.

LETTER XVII.

LADY ARABELLA SPENCER,

TO

CHARLOTTE MARNSDOWN.

REALLY, my dear Charlotte, you are an excellent limner, and have drawn Lord Derville to life, but are quite mistaken in your supposition that I am so well pleased at his being destined for my lord and master—I sincerely wish it was not so, but that I might be permitted to return into the country and again enjoy that true felicity I was depriv'd of when dragg'd

dragg'd from you—yet it is not in my power to prevent this union's taking place, for as I cannot urge any real objection to either his person or manner, what reason can I give Sir William for my refusal—indeed, I confess, his vivacity frequently renders him rather a desirable companion, and we spend many agreeable hours together—but still I do not experience the least vacuity at his absence, nor elation at his approach—when he comes I am pleas'd with his company, and if he stays away I am equally satisfied—the only anxiety I feel is when I seriously reflect that I am to be united to him for life, and the dread lest my present indifference should

should then encrease—but as neither of us are destitute of a tolerable share of spirits, it will be hard if we cannot make ourselves agreeable to each other—as I am not acquainted with any person to whom I would give the preference, I think myself bound to pay implicit obedience to Sir William's request—upon which consideration, Charlotte, I gave my consent, and the ceremony is to be perform'd the latter end of next week, therefore beg you will come to town immediately that I may enjoy as much of your company as possible.

Being pestered yesterday with Derville's nonsense and wanting something
to

to put a stop to it, I recollected your hint of his having address'd Henrietta, and turned to him in the middle of one of fine speeches, with "Pray, " my Lord, when did you see Miss " Henrietta Marnsdown?"

" I—I see Miss Marnsdown!"

" Yes, you—I presume you know " such a Lady."

" O dear, yes, madam—yes, yes, " I recollect seeing her once."

" Do you, indeed — well, that is " surprising!—now if I was to judge " from that countenance of your's I should

“should conclude you had spake to,

“as well as seen, her once — but

“you don’t remember that.”

“I neither know or remember any

“thing but that you are a bewitch-

“ing creature”—and the fellow took

me in his arms, and play’d ten thou-

sand times more fooleries than before,

so that I got much by attempting to

be witty.

He will be finely surpris’d when

he sees you, for come you must, and

if that is not immediately I’ll e’en

let him know what a fine character

you give him, for which he will,

most undoubtedly, be proud in having

an opportunity to make his proper acknowledgments.

To-morrow I am to be introduced to his sister, Lady Ann, who has been sent for from the country on purpose to be present on this occasion—I wish they would not make such a bustle, for since I have consented I could like it to be as quiet as possible—pray, however, my dear Charlotte, give my respectful compliments to your mama, and tell her I shall be proud of the honour of her presence; and now, in hopes of seeing you in a day or two, concludes,

your affectionate,

ARABELLA SPENCER.

LET.

LETTER XVIII.

LORD DERVILLE,

TO

SIR THOMAS CHARLTON.

MATTERS being at length concluded on, and the day fixed for my becoming the married man, I find myself bound, by the ties of friendship, to give you the earliest intelligence possible, to enable you to provide against every occurrence which might arise to prevent your being present at the ceremony—and to avoid all danger from delay, let me advise you to

set out towards London in a few hours after receiving this, as a day or two can be no object to you, whereas your presence may be of essential service to me—of which you may judge from what follows.

Thoughtlessness, with my friends, has ever been my chief characteristic; but there are times, Charlton, when the most idle disposition perceives it highly necessary to reflect a little on its own transactions, and to prevent, if possible, the many ill consequences which may arise from its past follies. I was led into this reverie from a circumstance which happened by toying with Lady Arabella.

We

We were both in high spirits and being alone I gave full scope to the fertility of my invention and ran on at a fine rate, which can easily be imagined when I tell you I was just in the right cue—for some time she stood the opposition and parry'd my romantic speeches with amazing dexterity, but finding she was likely to be worsted, she made an amazing transition in her manner, and with an arch significant look, ask'd me when I saw Miss Marnsdown—Conscience struck me dumb—don't mistake me, Tom, not from religious motives, for I am still too great a libertine to repent of the pleasures I have enjoyed with her, but from my conscious remissness in

not having been to know her determination with respect to the settlement; or, at least, to have empowered an attorney to draw up the writings so that they might have been delivered at any time—Although I could not, in any shape, satisfy myself what was Arabella's motive for such an interrogation, I was resolv'd to brazen it out by not taking any notice, but assuming a few liberties put her ladyship in the pouts, and by that means the subject was lost.

However, on reflection, I thought it was a folly to imagine such a question, especially when I recollected her manner of asking it, was void of meaning,

meaning, therefore determined to find out whether she was acquainted or not with our amour; and accordingly took an occasion, the next time I saw her, to introduce the Mains-down's, whom I asserted I had not heard or seen any thing of for a long while—this bait took, for the good-natured wench told me she had been inform'd I was very intimate in the family—but having persuaded her into a stronger belief of my veracity than her informant's, she acquainted me with Henrietta's elopement, and that all their endeavours to discover her retreat had been fruitless—convinc'd by this there is no suspicion lies at my door at present, it certainly

behoves me to endeavour to avoid any, which can only be effectually done by putting a final period to our intercourse, and this I want to accomplish as soon and in the best manner possible—therefore I wish you in town to assist me in settling it entirely to her advantage and satisfaction before I plight my hand to another—I am certain, that from innate principles of humanity you will readily grant me thy aid, and doubt not your immediate acquiescence—should it be made public now it might put an end to my present connection, the girls being so well acquainted, and although I should not be very miserable at the disappointment,

ment, still I have every reason to apprehend it would terminate in some disagreeable consequences, which by your knowledge of the Duke of G's. fiery temper it becomes needless for me to repeat.

It would be ridiculous enough after the day being fixed, preparations made, and the guests invited, to have it vanish into the air, merely from being detected in a little piece of gallantry—what a blessed confusion it would make—his Grace storming and swearing—the Lady chagrined and swelling with rage and indignation at the base ingrate for insulting her with his addresses after having been guilty
of

of a crime for which, dar'd she speak
 the sentiments of her heart, she loves
 him ten times more than ever—the
 company very angry at being depriv'd
 of a day's jocosity—and the offender,
 not ready to hang himself believe me,
 but contriving the quickest means to
 get out of such an unpleasing predi-
 cament, either by standing and bra-
 zening it out, or by taking flight and
 leaving them to draw what conclu-
 sions they think proper.

Now, Sir Thomas, as you possess
 a more than ordinary share of wisdom,
 morality, and sensibility, you cannot
 attempt to deny its being a duty in-
 cumbent on every well-dispos'd Chris-
 tian

to promote peace and good-fellowship with all mankind, and to exert their utmost endeavours to prevent any ill-blood arising betwixt father and son—from which positions I find you are obligated to lend me thy assistance, as I am confident your interference will prove an excellent preventative.

Your ideas of the necessary attachments that ought to be imbib'd before you embark upon the matrimonial cruize are too romantic to permit your having any flattering hopes of the success of my voyage, but will rather expect my happiness to be wreck'd on the rocks of discontent and infidelity;
yet

yet I am persuaded I have as fair a prospect for the attainment of happiness as those who sacrifice every consideration to the tender passion, for though love may be an excellent ingredient, it is no more than an ingredient, but requires many of equal facility to constitute a life of true content and solid felicity—I remember having read some poet who, upon this subject, says :

Let *reason* teach what *passion* fain wou'd hide,

That *Hymen's* bands by prudence shou'd be ty'd ;

Venus in vain the wedded pair wou'd crown,

If angry Fortune on their union frown ;

Soon will the flatt'ring dream of bliss be o'er,

And cloy'd imagination cheat no more ;

Then, waking to the sense of lasting pain,

With mutual tears the nuptial couch they stain,

And

And that fond love which shou'd afford relief,
Does but increase the anguish of their grief;
While both cou'd easier their own sorrows bear,
Than the sad knowledge of each other's care.

Now allowing this son of Parnassus
to have had a tolerable conception of
things, with what justice can you con-
demn me for entering into the bands
of Hymen, because the wanton god
has not been mischievous enough to
take my heart for a trial of his skill,
and by infecting me with the poison
conveyed in his arrows have rendered
me stark staring mad—made me swear
she was angel, though I should have
been most confoundedly disappointed
if I had not found her a woman—
protested her brightness exceeded the
heavenly

heavenly luminaries, tho' man, woman and child must be sensible she was mere flesh and blood—such high-flown notions might have done well enough in the days of yore, when they dwelt by purling streams in shady groves and roseate bowers, but they are not at all calculated for the present time—then unobserved, with your gentle nymph alone, in sweetest dalliance you might spend the live-long day, and joyfully at night, without all pomp, retire to rest—but now, as all things are turn'd the wrong side out, and we live in a kind of regular confusion, love among the rest must submit to the spirit of the times and yield to interest—upon these grounds
does

does your friend suffer himself to be yok'd to a help-mate, not without some hopes of enjoying as many matrimonial comforts as those who are more violently enamoured.

Every thing has been carried on with the greatest dispatch—no thanks to me I own—yet I have not been quite idle having taken a house in Portland Place, large enough in conscience—it will answer one convenience, that should there happen any domestic squabbles we need not fly to our neighbours to be out of each other's hearing, as there is plenty of room to keep our weaknesses at home, without being the heralds of our own folly.

folly and making ourselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world.—This, when we went to see it, I told her ladyship, who, though she did not seem to admire the idea, replied she should be happy to find me always master of such foresight—and that she may, so it prevents any uneasiness, is the sincere wish of.

your sincere friend,



DERVILLE.

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